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Ag 34 Area
Reserve

FATS

in Wartime Meals

CURRENT SERIAL RECORD

MAY 22 1944

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OUR FAIR SHARE

Farmers of the U. S. A. are pushing production of fats and oils to an all-time high. But with fats, as with meats, our wartime appetite and our military needs outrun the supply.

Point rationing gives each of us an equal chance to buy our share of fats and oils.

Though supplies are shorter than we would like, none of us need to go hungry for fats.

We may not always be able to get the kind of fats we like best. But fats can be alternated one for another, just so long as meals hold their satisfying, stick-to-the-ribs quality—one of the chief functions of fat in our food.

It is up to each of us to get the most out of every bit of edible fat . . . and to waste no fat by letting it scorch, turn rancid, or by helping ourselves too liberally. It is up to us to use our wits—adjust our tastes—and quickly make the best of the wartime change in the fat supply picture.

We can do surprising things to spread fats further and save them—if we are willing to put some of our peacetime habits and preferences on ice for the duration.

Why We Eat Fats

We like them. Fat gives richness and flavor to make mild-tasting and bulky foods more appetizing.

Fats give meals staying power. They linger longer in the stomach than any other food, to stave off that hungry "gone" feeling.

Fats perform functions in the body that no other food can take over. They supply certain basic body needs.

A little fat has a lot of calories. That is, weight for weight, fats supply more than twice as much body fuel as does any other kind of food. This fuel keeps the body warm and gives it energy to keep going. That's why our fighting men, outdoor workers, and war workers on long shifts need more fat in their diets. Thus they can get the extra energy they need from food without adding much bulk to their meals.

Some fats contain one or more vitamins. Fish-liver oils are good sources of vitamins A and D. Butter supplies vitamin A. So does much of the oleo-margarine on the market—the kind labeled as vitamin fortified.

We do not get all the fat in our meals from fats as such. Some comes from other foods that have a large amount of fat in their makeup. These include cream, fat meats and fat fish, soybeans, nuts, nut butters, egg yolk, cheese. Even avocados and olives can supply some of the fat in your meals.

★ **MAKE FATS GO FURTHER** ★

TABLE FATS

Get the fats you use as spreads for bread out of their storage place long enough ahead of serving time to soften them enough to spread easily. Don't let them melt or they'll soak in.

Serve table fats in pats half to three-fourths the usual size to cut down plate waste. Good fat-saving manners in wartime decree "direct from serving plate to toast."

Spread the spreads by mixing them with salad dressing, nut butters, chopped orange peel, or green vegetables. Or whip them up with gelatin and milk, or milk alone; but use them promptly—they soon get a "cheesy" taste. Remember you have no more fat than you had before—you are only making it go further.

For variety, some families use drippings from cooked meat or rendered poultry fat, flavored with salt and a little chopped onion if desired, instead of the common spreads for bread.

Be thrifty with salad dressings. Add them at the last minute, at the table if possible. That way the dressing won't settle out and be left uneaten.

Try cooked salad dressing with flour as a thickener to help spread the fat.

When you make a French dressing, remember not to be a "spendthrift of oil."

FATS FOR COOKING

Favor recipes using little fat. Work out ways to cut down the fat in your favorite recipes.

Stress methods of cooking in which fat used is served with the food instead of drained off. Many families are crossing deep-fat frying off their lists for the duration. They bake or pan-fry croquettes—cook fritters in a little shallow fat. If you do deep-fat fry, don't overheat the fat and be sure to save every bit. Strain it, store it carefully, and use it again and again.

No Smoking

Too much heat will spoil fat and food cooked in it. When fat reaches the smoking point it begins to break down chemically and gives off fumes with a sharp odor that irritate your nose and throat. Food fried in smoking fat may have an unhappy effect on the digestive tract. Fats that have reached the smoking point also will get rancid more quickly if you save them to use again. Be extra careful when frying with fats that have a low smoking point. Among the fats that smoke quickly are butter, oleomargarine, drippings, and olive oil.

Cook all meat at a moderate temperature for the sake of the fat as well as for the protein in the lean part.

Keep the heat low as you melt fat for sauce or pan frying and never let it reach the smoking point. If you must deep-fat fry, old-time signal to start cooking is when a cube of bread browns in 20 seconds for potatoes; in 40 seconds for croquettes and fish balls; and in 60 seconds for doughnuts and fritters. More accurate guide is a thermometer for deep-fat frying.

Measure Accurately

Waste no fats by using more than necessary in any recipe. This can result in greasy gravies and sauces, oily pastries, poor biscuits, and falling cakes.

Fats are not easy to measure. Here's the way some cooks measure less than a cupful. To measure $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fat, first fill a measuring cup $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water. Add fat and push it under the water until the water comes to the level of the cup top. Pour out the water and you have an accurate $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fat.

One Fat for Another

For all practical cooking purposes, fats may be substituted measure for measure in most recipes, except those rich with fat such as pastries. Only when a large amount of fat is used does the slight difference in their make-up matter. Lard, oils, and the cooking fats sold under many brand names, for instance, are 100-percent fat; butter and oleomargarine are about 80-percent fat.

When using an unsalted fat instead of a salted one, be sure to add salt.

When oil is used instead of a firm fat in pastries, mix the oil with the water before you combine it with the flour. When you use oil in cakes, mix it with the other liquid ingredients.

Almost any fat or oil may be used for pan frying if you are careful with the heat. The most important thing to remember is that fats vary as to the amount of heat they can stand.

Last-Minute Seasoning

Add the fat for flavoring cooked vegetables either just before the vegetables come off the stove or after you have them in a serving dish. You can get more seasoning effect from less fat that way.

Use Every Bit

Rinse the fat out of cooking pans with a little hot water and add to your soup kettle or use in sauce or gravy.

Save the wrappings that come off fats. Melt or scrape off any that clings to wrappings. Or use it to grease pans, or rub over the crust of your home-baked bread.



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Keep Fats Usable

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You have paid for the fat on the meat you buy, so bring it home. If there's more than enough to cook with the meat, cut off the extra. Some of the trimmings, such as good-flavored beef fat or ham fat, can season dishes in the same ways as you use salt pork. For instance, try it with baked or boiled beans. Other trimmings need to be rendered or "tried out" before you use them. Some need to be clarified, in addition.

Strain and store fat left over from frying. If necessary, clarify it, also.

If you like, put several kinds of drippings or left-over fats in one jar. Always check to make sure the fat you have saved is not turning rancid before you pour new fat on old. Never use rancid fats for food. It is unpleasant to taste and unwholesome.

How To Render Fats

To render a fat is to heat it slowly so that the fat melts and separates from the connective tissue. You can render several kinds of fat together if you wish.

Grind or cut into fine pieces fat trimmed from meat. Put it in a double boiler or in a saucepan that can be set in hot water. Or, if you have the oven going, set the pan in a slow oven. As soon as the fat is melted, strain it through a clean cloth to remove any particles of connective tissue. When it cools, store it in a cool place.

Save the pieces you strain out. These cracklings are good in muffins and other hot breads.

How To Clarify Used Fats

The purpose of clarifying used fats is to take out bits of other food and improve the flavor.

Solid fat: pork, beef, lamb. Pour hot water over the fat. Add 1 cup water for each cup fat. Heat this mixture slowly for 10 minutes. Stir well. Strain through a clean cloth. Chill. When the layer of fat, which comes to the top, is hard, pour off the water. Then scrape off any dark material that may be clinging to the underside of the fat. Get as much water as possible out of the fat. Use promptly. Clarified fats will not keep indefinitely.

Soft fats (poultry) and oils. To clarify oils and fats that are very soft at room temperature, add thin slices of raw potato (4 or 5 slices to a cup of fat) and cook slowly over low heat for about 20 minutes. Strain the fat through a clean cloth and cool.

Some Good Uses for Saved Fats

All left-over fat can be saved to use again, unless it is too strong in flavor or scorched.

Saved fats may include drippings from roast or broiled meat or from poultry rendered trimmings of pork, beef, poultry—good-flavored fats saved from frying.

Number 1 use is gravy. Use saved fat also in sauces for scalloped dishes. Or add it to soups.

Flavor vegetables with it. Add to plain boiled vegetables, mash with potatoes, mix with a little vinegar and use as the dressing for wilted lettuce, top off a baked potato with it, use for pan-frying cabbage, squash, and other vegetables.

Add during cooking to meat that hasn't enough fat of its own.

Make it the fat in piecrust, cake, gingerbread, waffles, muffins, biscuits, stuffing for poultry or meat, macaroni, and other cereal dishes.

"Butter" bread crumbs in it.

To mask the flavor of lamb, mutton, and other such fats, combine with onions or mixed vegetables in soup, or use as the shortening in crust for meat pie or in spice cake, gingerbread, or orange cakes or cookies.

Remember these Fat Facts

Freezing is the quickest way to spoil

over storage spoils fat. Best way to store fats is in a closely covered container in a dark place, and away from strong-flavored and strong-scented foods.

Fats need to be kept very cool, especially there are some cooking fats on the market that keep well at room temperature.

Left over from cooking spoils more than new fat. So keep them extra cool and use as soon as possible.

Always check on fats to be sure they aren't getting rancid.

Animal fats, such as butter, are least rancid of all. So when you use your fats, be sure to put it where the most count most with your family.

On the days of limited fat supply, dishes that use fat are out of step with the times.

Waste fat should be salvaged. Any fat that can't be used as a spread or in cooking can be strained into the salvage can and used in for salvage. This fat ends up in other industrial uses that speed up the war program.

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Save the wrappings that come off fats. Melt or scrape off any that clings to wrappings. Or use it to grease pans, or rub over the crust of your home-baked bread.



Overheating is the quickest way to spoil any fat.

Improper storage spoils fat. Best way to keep fats is in a closely covered container, in a dark place, and away from strong-flavored and strong-scented foods.

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Fats saved over from cooking spoil more quickly than new fat. So keep them extra cold and use as soon as possible.

Keep a check on fats to be sure they are not getting rancid.

Flavorful fats, such as butter, are least abundant of all. So when you use your share of these, be sure to put it where the flavor will count most with your family.

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All waste fat should be salvaged. Any fat you can't use as a spread or in cooking should be strained into the salvage can and turned in for salvage. This fat ends up in munitions or is put to other industrial uses that speed up the war program.

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FAT-SAVING RECIPES



Crackling Corn Bread

2 cups corn meal	2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup sifted flour	1 egg, beaten
4 teaspoons baking powder	2 cups milk
1 cup cracklings	

Sift together the dry ingredients, add the milk, to which beaten egg has been added, and mix well. Stir in the cracklings cut into small pieces or ground through a food chopper. (Cracklings are the crisp brown pieces left after fat is rendered.) Pour the mixture into a greased pan and bake in a hot oven (425° F.) 30 to 40 minutes or until well browned. Serve piping hot.

If you use sour milk in the above recipe, add 1 teaspoon of soda and omit the baking powder.

Patriotic Piecrust

(Makes 2 crusts)

5 tablespoons fat (commercial oil or fat, or home-rendered poultry or meat fat)	1 1/2 cups sifted flour
	1 teaspoon salt
	2 1/2 to 4 tablespoons water

Work the fat into sifted flour and salt, with finger tips or a fork, until mixture is granular. Sprinkle some of the water over the surface, combining each dampened part into a dough. Add more water sparingly until mixture is a stiff dough. Divide the dough in half to make two crusts and roll on a lightly floured board to fit a 9-inch pie plate.

If you make the pastry with oil, mix the oil with the 2 1/2 tablespoons of water, then combine it with the flour. Roll out as directed above.

If you are using a rendered beef fat or other hard fat, cut it thoroughly into the flour, and warm the water before you add it, to soften the fat. Use 6 tablespoons of a hard fat in the above recipe.

Piecrust Stretchers

Make more one-crust, fewer two-crust pies. Or use lattice pastry strips for the top crust.

A pleasing variation of the one-crust pie is a cobbler, or deep-dish pie. To make it, partly fill a baking dish with lightly sweetened fruit. Cover with dough. Bake in a hot oven until the crust is brown. Make it in a family-sized dish or in individual pans. Vary it by laying strips of pastry over the top, lattice fashion.

Bake pastry separately in little squares or diamonds. Heat the fruit sauce and sweeten to taste. Serve in individual dishes, with one or two of the pastries topping off the fruit. Add the pastries just before serving time, so they will be crisp to eat.

Gingerbread

2 cups sifted flour	1 egg
1/2 teaspoon soda	1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon baking powder	1/4 cup melted fat (drippings, rendered meat or poultry fat, lard)
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1 teaspoon ginger	1 cup molasses

Sift together the flour, soda, baking powder, salt, and ginger. Combine the beaten egg, milk, and melted fat, and add to the dry ingredients, stirring in the molasses last. Beat well. Bake in a shallow pan in a moderate oven (350° F.) about 30 minutes or in muffin pans in a hot oven (400° F.) for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve hot with applesauce or lemon sauce.

Biscuits, Wartime Style

2 cups sifted flour	2 tablespoons fat (drippings, rendered pork, beef fat, or lard)
1 teaspoon salt	
3 teaspoons baking powder	Milk to make soft dough (3/4 to 1 cup)

Sift the dry ingredients together and cut in the fat well. Stir in enough milk to make a soft dough. Drop the dough by spoonfuls onto a baking sheet and bake in a hot oven (425° F.) for about 15 minutes or until lightly browned. This recipe makes about 12 biscuits.

The fat may be reduced to 1 tablespoon in the above recipe, but this makes a crisper and less tender biscuit.

To make a "lid" for meat or vegetable pie, roll the dough about one-half inch thick, cover the stew, and bake in a hot oven.

Foundation Cake

1/4 to 1/3 cup fat	2 cups sifted cake flour (or 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour)
1 cup sugar	3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon flavoring	1 teaspoon salt
1 egg, beaten	3/4 cup milk

Cream the fat, add the sugar gradually, and then the flavoring. Beat in the eggs. Add the sifted dry ingredients and milk alternately and beat until mixture is smooth. Pour into lightly greased pans. For a layer cake, bake in a moderate oven (375° F.) for 25 minutes. For a loaf, bake in a very moderate oven (325°) for 40 to 45 minutes. As cupcakes, bake in a moderate oven (375°) for 20 minutes.

Quick-mix cake.—When time is short, use very soft or melted fat or oil and mix the quick way. Sift all dry ingredients together and combine milk, eggs, fat, and flavoring. Add the dry ingredients to the liquid all at once and stir until the mixture is smooth. Bake as above, and serve while hot.

Oatmeal Cookies

1 1/2 tablespoons flour	1 1/4 cups oatmeal
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 egg
1 teaspoon baking powder	1/4 cup milk
1/3 cup sugar	1/2 teaspoon flavoring

Sift together flour, salt, and baking powder. Mix in the sugar and oatmeal, and add to the slightly beaten egg and milk. Add the flavoring and mix until well blended. Drop by spoonfuls onto a greased cookie sheet and bake in a moderate oven (350° F.). This makes a crisp, chewy cookie with a nutty flavor.

Salad Dressing

2 tablespoons fat (drippings or rendered trimmings)	1 1/2 teaspoons salt
3 tablespoons flour	1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon mustard	1 cup milk
	1 egg
	1/3 cup vinegar

Blend the melted fat and flour mixed with the seasonings. Add the cold milk. Heat and stir constantly until thickened. Cover and cook over boiling water for 5 minutes longer. Add part of the sauce slowly to the beaten egg while stirring. Combine with the rest of the sauce. Stir and cook a few minutes. Add the vinegar slowly and continue to cook until thick.

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